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FOR EUR/NB DESK OFFICER STEPHEN WHEELER

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ICELANDIC MFA REQUESTS FOIA INFORMATION ON HALLDOR  
LAXNESS

¶1. (U) Post received a diplomatic note from the Icelandic MFA requesting FOIA information on Iceland's eminent Nobel Prize winner, Halldor Laxness (1902-1998). Laxness, one of Iceland's most famous citizens, remains a topic of considerable public interest, and the question of what historical documents concerning him may be in U.S. archives is debated frequently in the press here. Text of dip note follows.

¶2. (U) (Begin Text)

2/15/2008  
Ref.: UTN07120142/34.O.010

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and has the honor to request information about documents regarding Mr. Halldor Kiljan Laxness. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs would like to inquire on behalf of Mr. Halldor Kiljan Laxness's descendants what documents concerning Mr. Halldor Kiljan Laxness are available and what restrictions or classifications remain on any documents not already made available to the family of Mr. Halldor Kiljan Laxness.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America and assurance of its highest consideration.  
(End Text)

¶3. (SBU) Action Request: Post would appreciate an expeditious formal response to the diplomatic note. We understand that the Foreign Minister takes a personal interest in this matter, and note that she intends to visit Washington in early April.

van Voorst